

I need data for ZIP codes. What summary level should I use?

Data.census.gov offers a few different options for getting data on ZIP codes and ZCTAs. Here we address the differences between the ZIP code- and ZCTA-related summary levels.

Both the Decennial Census and the American Community Survey publish data according to Zip Code Tabulation Areas, or ZCTAs. More information on ZCTAs can be found at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/guidance/geo-areas/zctas.html>.

The ZIP Code Business Patterns survey, on the other hand, uses the traditional 5-Digit ZIP Codes that are trademarked by the U.S. Postal Service.

Summary Level Code	Summary Level Name	Can be used with...
850	ZCTA3	• DEC Summary File 1
851	ZCTA3 within State	• DEC Summary File 1
852	State-ZCTA3-County (or part)	• DEC Summary File 1
860	5-Digit ZCTA	• ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles • ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables • ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables • DEC Summary File 1 • DEC Summary File 2 • DEC American Indian and Alaska Native Summary File
861	5-Digit ZIP Code	• ANN Business Patterns Zipcode Business Patterns
870	State within Zip Code Tabulation Area (Five-Digit)	• DEC Summary File 1
871	5-Digit ZCTA (or part) within State	• DEC Summary File 1
880	ZCTA-State-County	• DEC Summary File 1
881	State-5-Digit ZCTA (or part) within State-County	• DEC Summary File 1

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